

This is Us



Family Literacy Project
Fall 2022

Becoming Me

By Alora Sherlock

Once I was a little baby
Now I am an 8 year old
Once I lost my favorite toy
But then I found my favorite toy
If I could have one wish, it would be to go to Disney World
If I could change the world, the world would see that I love cats
Once I couldn't write a story
But now you should see me writing stories
I used to feel so lonely because I had nobody to play with
But now I know I can play with my baby brother
The one thing I've learned is to be helpful
Once I was a little baby
But now I am an 8 year old

Becoming You

By Ashley Sherlock

Once you were my baby girl
But now you are my pre-teen
If I could have one wish for you
It would be that you always want to hang out with me
I know you can change the world with your fiery spirit
And your unwavering rule following
Once you couldn't read very many words
But now you can read whole chapter books by yourself
You used to be so small
But now you know you are almost as tall as me
Once you were my baby girl
But now you are my pre-teen

Art

By Ashley Sherlock

Vibrant, Beautiful
Up for interpretation
Colorful Beauty

Reversal Poem

By: Ashley Sherlock

I am a bad mom
I refuse to believe that
I can do something right
I realize this may be a shock, but
I make really good food
Is a lie
I don't pay enough attention to my kids
In 30 years, I will tell my children that
I have my priorities straight because
Sleeping
Is more important than
Mothering
I tell you this:
Once upon a time
I had time for reading
But the will not be true in my era
Reading is for children
Experts tell me
I am not doing enough
I do not conclude that
I will choose love
In the future,
I will not give hugs and kisses
No longer can it be said that
My children are well loved
It will be evident that
My children do not love me
It is foolish to presume that
I am a good mom

And all of this will come true **unless we reverse it.**

Alora

By Ashley Sherlock

Alora
Loving, Adventurous
Lego building, Dancing, Making Art
She loves cats
Alora

Aiden

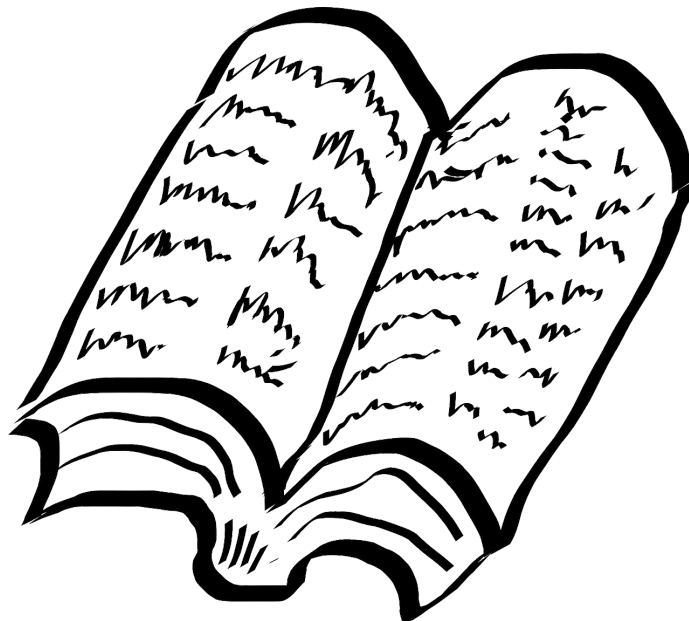
By Ashley Sherlock

Aiden
Wild, Sweet
Trucking, Running, Laughing
Obsessed with vehicles
Aiden

I Am

By Ashley Sherlock

I am a mom of two wonderful children
I wonder who my kids will be when they grow older
I hear "Mom" a hundred times a day
I see how fast my children have grown
I want time to slow down so I can enjoy the years they still believe
My kisses make everything better and "Because I said so," is
And acceptable answer to the question, "Why?"
I am a mom
I pretend to be ok sometimes when I am not
I feel so many mixed emotions each day
I touch their faces to let them know I care
I worry I am not doing enough
I cry when I overreact and feel bad when I yell
I am a mom
I understand nobody is perfect
I say sorry when I realize I did or said something I shouldn't have
I dream of alone time
I try to learn from my mistakes and do better next time
I hope my children know how much I love and care for them
I am a person who happened to become a mom



Becoming Me

By Coralie Hagen (age 7)

Once I was IN FIRST GRADE.
Now I am IN SECOND GRADE.
Once I lost MY STUFFED DOG.
But then I found MY STUFFED DOG.
If I could have one wish, it would be TO FLY.
If I could change the world, the world would see LOVE.
Once I couldn't BE AT HOME,
But now you should see me AT HOME.
I used to feel SAD.
But now I know TO BE HAPPY.
The one thing I've learned is TO BE HAPPY.
Once I was YOUNG,
But now I am OLD.

Becoming You

By Mom

Once you were DEPENDENT,
But now you are NOT SO DEPENDENT
If I could one wish for you ITS THAT YOU FIND HAPPINESS AMONGST YOU
PLACE IN THIS WORLD.
I know you can change the world with YOUR EMPATHY, DETERMINATION AND
YOUR PLAYFULNESS.
Once you couldn't TALK,
But now you can NOT STOP.
You use to be DEPENDENT,
But now you know HOW TO DO SO MUCH.
Once you were UNSURE,
But now you are CONFIDENT.

Thinking, Overthinking and Rethinking Mom

Madison Hagen

I am a terrible mother
And i refuse to believe that
I am strong
I realize this may be a shock, but
I am good at different things
Is a lie
I am not important
In 30 years, I will tell my children that
I have my priorities straight because
Work
Is more important than
Life
I tell you this:
Once upon a time
I dreamed
But this will not be true in my era
I have no choice
Experts tell me
My habits won't lead to success
I do not conclude that
Happiness can be built
In the future,
My children will despise me
No longer can it be said that
I am a good friend
It will be evident that
I failed
It is foolish to presume that
I can be successful
*And all of this will come true **unless we reverse it.***

Becoming You

By: Stephen Villerot

Once you were shy and timid,
But now you are strong and confident.
If I could have one wish for you it would be to grow as
old as possible with my wife and kids.
I know you can change the world with one compliment at a
time.
Once you couldn't face your fears and insecurities,
But now you can look at every obstacle as a challenge.
You used to be unhealthy and naive,
But now you know how to take care of yourself and make
better choices.
Once you were lazy and unmotivated,
But now you are a hard worker and driven.



This Is Just To Say...

Blake, This Is Just To Say...

You can do hard things.

When you put your mind to something,

You can and will accomplish it.

Even if it doesn't happen exactly

How you envisioned or as quickly as you hoped—

You can do hard things.

This is just to say...

You are beautiful.

Inside and out.

To the human eye

And to the human soul.

Even in the moments when others might make you feel otherwise—

Never forget who you are.

This is just to say...

You are my greatest gift.

I am blessed to be your momma.

And I will love you with all my heart and soul,

Forever & Ever.

~Jessica Villerot

This Is Just To Say...

Jack, This Is Just To Say...

You can do anything your heart desires.

If you want to pilot fighter jets—do it.

If you want to build huge skyscrapers—do it.

If you want to be the best daddy in the whole world—do it.

Do what you want,

How you want.

Just be true to your heart.

This is just to say...

You are brave.

Even when you feel

Scared

Worried

Alone

Remember that it's ok

To feel that way,

But then

Take a deep breath,

Move the butterflies to the side,

And believe that you are brave.

This is just to say...

You are my greatest gift.

I am blessed to be your momma.

I will love you with all my heart and soul,

Forever & Ever.

~Jessica Villerot

Becoming You

By: Kaylee Stoops

Once you were the only child
But now you are the sister
If I could have one wish for you I'd wish you'd stop growing so big
Once you couldn't be the helper but now you are the best helper
You used to be the only child
But now you know your sissy
Once you were the only child
But now you are Yaya

Becoming You

By: Leala Houx (age 7)

Once you were Kaylee
But now you are my buluvud mom
If I could have one wish for you I'd wish for your love to
be forever
I know you can change the world love
Once you couldn't have me
But now you can
You used to be alone
But now you know you arn't
Once you were lonely
But now you're my butufil mom

The Cinquain

Leala
Creative And Beautiful
Bow Wearing, Make-Up Loving, Big Sis
So Creative She Can Think Of Something In a Flash
Big Sis, Yaya, Sissy

Landon
Mischievous And Handsome
Playful, Truck Loving, Middle Child
Will Do Anything To Find Trouble
Bubba Wub, Daniel Lee, Big Bro

Layne
Fearless And Handsome
The Follower, The Adventure, The Baby
Always Following The Role Of Older Siblings
Baby Bruddy, Wugga WeeWee, Baby Henry

Kaylee Stoops

Letter To Dad

I no sumtims we fite over you and i love you and i mis you
wene you are at wirk thanc you for the toys.Love Leala

Leala Houx

Age 7

Oct.24th 2022

The Cinquain

Leala,Landon,Layne
Lovable Siblings
Helpful,Happy,Loving
Be Lost Without Them Everyday
Houx

Lester Houx

For Kadence

Becoming You

By Lisa Kerner

Once you were cute

But now you are beautiful

If I could have one wish for you it would be to never doubt yourself and always believe you can do anything.

I know you can change the world with your smile and through your thoughtfulness to others

Once you couldn't stand dresses and girly things

But now you can go to homecoming in a beautiful dress and be beautiful

You used to be timid about doing things

But now you know you can do anything you put your mind and heart to

Once you were little

But now you are powerful

For Andrew

Becoming You

By Lisa Kerner

Once you were small

But now you are big and fast

If I could have one wish for you

It would be that your imagination and cleverness carry with you through life

I know you can change the world with your drive to learn new things

Once you couldn't walk

But now you can run all day

You used to be scared to go by yourself

But now you know the world has so many possibilities

Once you were small

But now you are mighty!

You Say/I Say

By Tinsley Maki

Mom says, "eat your vegetables."
I say, "If I do, do I get dessert?"
Mom thinks about Christmas presents.
I think, why can't I transform into a dragon?
Mom likes vegetables.
I like art, reading and adventures.

You Say/I Say

By Ailyn Maki

Mom says, "I love you!"
I say, "I love you!"
Mom thinks I'm kind.
I think momma is kind.
Mom likes fish.
I like lasagna.

You Say/I Say

By Quinn Maki

Mom says, "Quinn Annabell!"
I say, "What did I do?"
Mom thinks it's important to clean the house.
I think I should be able to read instead of have the house perfect.
Mom likes going on walks.
I like sunsets and reading.

This is Just to Say...

By Kari Maki

This is just to say:

I'm sorry that I
Can't keep it all
Straight.

I try really hard
But my head gets too
Full.

Forgive me for
Calling you the wrong name,
Forgetting to buy a gift for the birthday party, and
Not remembering who likes mustard on their ham sandwich.
I will strive to do better.

My name is Mary
I like to sleep
Mom of two beautiful girls
Lover of chocolate
Who feels tired all the time
Who needs to be understood
Who fears losing her babies
Who gives unconditional love
Who would like to have a nap everyday
Resident of Charlevoix the beautiful
Selph

I am Mary
I wonder what my future holds
I hear people talking
I see me writing
I want to sleep
I am tired

-Mary Selph

This poem is about my daughter Riley. She is so kind and loving to everyone she meets. She loves to play with her babies, barbies, and jumping on her trampoline. I would die without her. Riley my love.

BECOMING ME BY MARY SELPH

Once I was a child
Now I am a adult
Once I lost my ability to love
But then I found you
If I could have one wish, it would be to find you sooner
If I could change change the world, the world would see that your love and energy
could make the world a kinder place
Once I couldn't read
But now you should see me read many books
I used to feel insecure
But now i know what I like to read
The one thing I've learned is I can take pride in my reading
Once I was dumb
But now I am confident.

Reversal Poem:

I am a ugly person
And I refuse to believe that
I am loveable
I realize this may be a shock, but
I am caring
Is a lie
I am a great cook
In 30 years, I will tell my children that
I have my priorities straight because
Hateful
Is more important than
Kind
I tell you this:
Once upon a time
There was a mother that loved her children
But this will not be true in my era
I will never have children
Experts tell me
There will be no love in the world
I do not conclude that
I am beautiful
In the future,
The world will be dead
No longer can it be said that
Children are the future
It will be evident that
The world is going to shit
It is foolish to presume that
Beauty in the world still exist
*And all of this will come true UNLESS WE
REVERSE IT.*

By Mary Selph

Now is the time I can not think of anything to write. I have always struggled with not only thinking of what to write, but how to put thoughts to paper. How can can you make a bunch of sentences to explain one thing? I guess its a lack of imagination and practice. I love taking notes because I do not have to come up with the thoughts or words. For example I love to copy scriptures from the Bible, but thats about it. I should try journaling to help put thoughts to words.

-Mary Selph

Week 1

Addyson

Fun-loving, free

Always looking for an adventure

Wears her heart on her sleeve

Addy Mae

Week 5

Thomas

Sensitive, Funny

Tractors, trucks, and lots of mud

Expressive, determined, sweet

-Samantha Johnstone

I am a cynic

And I refuse to believe that

The world is good

I realize that this may be a shock, but

Have good intentions

Is a lie

“I will not find happiness”

In 30 years, will tell my children that

I have my priorities straight because

Misery

Is more important

Than laughter

I tell you this:

Once upon a time

Everything will work out

But this will not be true in my era

All good things come to an end

Experts tell me

It's wishful thinking

I do not conclude that

I can lean on you

In the future,

It's me against you

No longer can it be said that

We are in this together

*And all of this will come true UNLESS WE
REVERSE IT.*

-Samantha Johnstone



Bennett

Strong willed, adventurous
Idea inventor
Thinker of solutions
Curious seeker of facts
Planner of perfection
Blessed, Ben

Elizabeth

Witty, spontaneous
Relentless reader
Ambitious goal seeker
Lover of canines
Dreamer of giant feats
El, Ellie

Victoria

Thoughtful, creative
Patient for results
Painter of imagination
Lover of felines
Climber of anything
Tori, Torch, Vic, Vickie Vic
-Jennifer Fruk

Jennifer

Believer, forgiver, passionate, resilient
Relative of Italy
Lover of snow and skiing
Who feels joy for other's happiness
Who needs appreciation
Who fears destruction of nature
Who seeks truth and authenticity
Who would like more kindness in the world
Resident of Charlevoix
Fruk
-Jennifer Fruk

Reversal poem-

I am a jerk
I refuse to believe that people are helpful
I realize this may be a shock, but you should love thy
neighbor is a lie
I am selfish
In 30 years, I will tell my children that
I have my priorities straight because
Greed is more important than humbleness
I tell you this, once upon a time people worked
together for change
But this will not be true in my era, people argued
Experts tell me it's a lost cause
I do not conclude that a new leader will emerge
In the future hate will prevail
No longer can it be said that we must stand together
It will be evident that we will all fall
It is foolish to presume that everyone is born good
And all of this will come true unless we REVERSE it.

I refuse to believe that I am a jerk
I realize this may be a shock, but people are
helpful
I am unselfish
In 30 years, I will tell my children that
I have my priorities straight because you
should love thy neighbor
It is a lie greed is more important than
humbleness
But this will not be true in my era, people
worked together for change
I tell you this, once upon a time people argued
I do not conclude that it's a lost cause
Experts tell me a new leader will emerge
No longer can it be said that hate will prevail
In the future we must stand together
It is foolish to presume that we will all fall
It will be evident that everyone is born good
-Jeremy Fruk

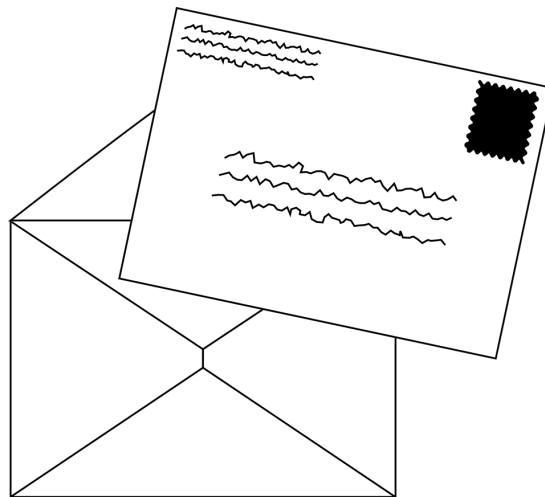
I am a mother whose name is Meghan.
I am a mother who loves being a boy mom.
I am the mother of Adam, Sawyer and Noah.
I am a lover of sloppy kisses, messy hands and muddy faces.
I am a mother who feels protected.
I am a mother who needs more cuddles.
I am a mother who fears that she is not doing enough.
I am a mother who gives the best hug's and kisses.
I am a mother who would like more noodle necklaces.
I am a mother who lives in Charlevoix.
I am a mother of boys who calls me Mama.

Meghan Dishaw.

Dear Ashton,

You make my Heart jump for joy. The radiant smile, the love you have for others, and Life. You have a huge Heart, the nurturing, and caring you have for others puts a huge smile on my face. Rambunctious and funny makes me laugh. I hear your little voice and I know, "That's my Ashton!" Always know your Mother Loves You With All Her Heart!

Mr. Handsome,
Mom



Olive

Compassionate, Brave

Stays true to herself, defends those she loves, spreads joyful enthusiasm

She's a "noticer" to whom I will be forever grateful for what she has helped me to see.

My Oli

Grant

Empathetic, Beautifully Complex

Lives vigorously, plays enthusiastically, loves deeply

His depth of thought often surpasses his years.

G-force

Vincent

Loyal, Passionate

Exudes Confidence, Spreads Joy, Shares Generously

He is a fierce defender of those he loves

Vincinator

-Jennifer Grossi

Olive

Stylish, Caring

Social Butterfly, Studious, Techy

Can love things for what they are and sees the beauty in everything

Kiddo

Grant

Energetic, Smart

Lover of Dinosaurs, Master Lego Builder, Naturalist

He's a kid who doesn't quit and runs full throttle from morning to night

G-Force

Vince

Creative, Brave

Builder, Camper, Eater of Bananas

He sees things in his own way. He's in a world of his own.

Vincenzo

-Dave Grossi

I am Jennifer
I wonder what my future holds.
I hear so much when I let myself be quiet.
I see incredible beauty when I slow down.
I want more time.
I am learning.

I pretend my body is younger.
I feel grateful, even when I'm sad.
I touch things I have lost when I touch my horse's neck.
I worry I will have regrets.
I cry more than I'd like, but maybe not enough.
I am stronger than I realize.

I understand life is precious.
I say almost everything that's on my mind.
I dream of making amazing memories.
I try to slow down.
I hope I am enough.
I am brave, but scared.

-Jennifer Grossi

Fall or Autumn

by Olive Grossi

Fall or Autumn

Rain or Shine

Cold or Warm

Fall and Autumn

Windy and Colorful

Bright Moons and Warm Sunsets

Fall/Autumn is a special season.

It can be cold or warm.

It can be rainy or sunny.

It can be windy and colorful.

It can have bright moons and warm sunsets.

Autumn/Fall is a gorgeous mix between all of the seasons and has to be one of the most beautiful times of the year.

Canoeing with my Daddy

by Grant Grossi with help from Olive Grossi

The day was warm.

Splash!

A duck had flown in from above into the lake.

Swoop

A silent crane was busy hunting on the shore.

Step. Step.

I stepped onto the red canoe with my Daddy and my brother.

Drip. Drip.

The leftover water drips from the paddle and on to the calm lake.

Trickle. Trickle.

The water carries the canoe around the whole lake.

The end.

Black Panther

by Vincent Grossi with help from Olive Grossi

Quick

Like a shadow.

Sneaky

Like a shadow.

Claws sharp

Like a hook.

Teeth sharp

Like a hook.

Eyes seeking.

Ears listening.

RAWR!

The Black Panther leaps out of the dark and onto its prey!

The Black Panther is going to have a yummy dinner tonight!

Lessons

Over the past year I've learned a lot about myself, what I want to be, what I was, and most importantly what I am. When we were asked to publish one of our writings I looked back at what I had. Some were funny, some were too personal, and some were garbage. So I decided what the heck, I'll go outside my comfort zone and speak on what I've learned.

Writing has always been important to me, an escape, or a way of expression. When I was young we would spend our summers in Philly with our dad, where at night we would have to journal. I liked writing, so I didn't mind it. I learned that every day I took something from it. I learned to appreciate the smaller things in life. I also learned to understand more. I wrote about things I did, things I saw, some fun, some great, other things that weren't so fun. But I loved writing. I carried that joy of writing with me as I grew up.

I wrote all the time. I loved writing stories of my travels, sports, even some fiction. I was fortunate growing up to have some cool experiences so it was always easy to find a topic. As an adult I was the last member of my friends to have a phone. When I was on one of my wild adventures I'd send letters so they knew I was ok and where I was!

This past year I was in a dark place with my broken leg and ankle. I was scared, sad, I didn't know what would happen. It was hard for me to accept that feeling bad for myself and not motivating myself were slowly eating away at me. I needed a change. I needed to figure out what could get me out of this slump. Writing, writing had always helped before, why not try this?

One day I just decided that "today" I'm not turning on the TV, I'm just going to sit here and figure something out. I put some music on, That's always been a good relaxation for me as well. Then it hit me, a serious turning point. I was listening to Bob Marley and really hearing the music, not just listening to it. Some songs really pumped me up, others made me more depressed. But most importantly I was listening to stories.. I thought "hey, why can't I just write my thoughts, my stories?"

I found a couple journals I had, in a box in my closet. Took them out and just started writing. Mostly thoughts and gibberish. Then I figured I write a story of my life experiences, like the "good ole days" I brought so much joy to think about the wild and crazy days. I would write and write about adventures, so much so that I'd wake up in the middle of the night and add notes to my journal on my phone. I was writing about stories of living on the coast of Maine to living on an island in the Puget Sound WA and everywhere in between. Most of those stories are best kept in those pages though haha. But what I realized was no matter where I was or who I was with everything always worked out. Writing about those memories sparked details of what I've done, and lessons I learned along the way.

I've learned some tough lessons along the way, everything isn't a perfect story. But everything IS a lesson. All I can do is move forward and learn from adventures and try to be a better person for me and most importantly for my son. Writing to me is a healthy way to express feelings or what's happening, or happened or just thought. A great lesson I've learned came from the words spoken by an incredible artist Bob Marley, "You never know how strong you are until being strong is your only choice". That is a lesson I'll always be working on

-Todd Pelton

I am

written by: Kayla

I am a mom
I wonder about the future
I hear pencils on paper
I see books
I want comfort
I am resilient
I pretend with my daughters
I feel great about participating in this workshop
I worry about EVERYTHING
I am a fighter
I understand that I will never fully understand
I say I love you
I dream big
I try my hardest
I am a Harry Potter fan

I am

Kayla
Charismatic, funny, caring, busy
Relative of Eleigh, Sydney, Hazley, Preston
Lover of doctor shows
Who feels fiercely
Who needs laughter
Who fears spiders
Who gives joy
Who would like ice cream
Resident of Charlevoix
Schneider

Reading with my grandma is a fond childhood memory I have. I can connect with Anna in the fact that my grandma only had an 8th grade education, and was then pulled to help out on the family farm. Therefore, she was not a fluent reader, but had the basic skills. I loved how proud dad and mom were of grandma's accomplishment, and how proud she was of herself.

-Kayla Schneider

In school writing always came naturally to me, as long as I had a direction. Stream of consciousness writings weren't my thing. I was always having an issue with being what my teacher would call being "long winded." I was constantly being told to make my work more concise. For example, if I was told to write a 500 word essay, my first draft could easily be 1500 words. I was most excited about writing descriptive assignments, and making sure whatever the topic was that whoever was listening to it felt like they were right there in the story. English was always a favorite subject of mine, and one that I excelled at. I wish I could have carried that into adulthood. Sadly, I don't have the time to write anything except a grocery list. Four kids will keep you busy, not leaving much time for anything else. However as of more recently, I have started journaling. I've had some tough life things happen that were out of my control. Journaling helps to regain and take back some of that control.

-Kayla Schneider

You Say/I Say - from different perspectives

Todd says "What if..."

Krista says "Stop worrying about things that are out of your control"

Todd thinks he needs no one

Krista thinks it's OK to ask for help

Todd likes the gym, Tom Brady, and TikTok

Krista likes none of those- just walk the dogs!

Krista says "Todd, pull it together"

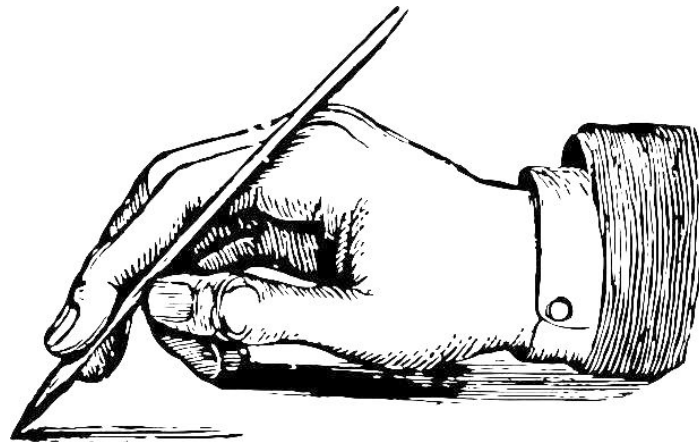
Todd says "Good talk"

Krista thinks Todd has bad habits

Todd thinks they aren't bad- just different

Krista likes dogs, warm weather, cooking, and other weird things

Todd likes Dr Ward, maple oatmeal, baking banana bread, and Mattea



Arm Me with Love

Arm me with books
So my students can
Travel to exotic lands,
Meet incredible characters,
Face intimidating foes

Arm me with colleagues
So we can
Collaborate
Commiserate
Support, and sustain
One another

Arm me with autonomy
So I can make decisions
That are best for my kids
In the moment

Arm me with support
So I know
Someone will be there
When I need
A shoulder to cry on
Or an ear to listen

Arm me with love
So my students know
I care about each and every one
As I do for my own
So they know they are special
To someone

Jane Garver

I am insignificant
And I refuse to believe that
Life is good
I realize this may be a shock, but
Teachers make a difference
Is a lie
Teaching is for losers
Years from now, I will tell my students that
I have my priorities straight because
Money
Is more important than
Love
I tell you this:
Once upon a time
Teachers were respected
But this will not be true in my time
Schools are irrelevant
Experts tell me
Children are useless
I do not expect that
Creativity counts
In the future,
Schools will be factories
No longer can it be said that
A good education is the key to success
It will be evident that
Society values power
It is foolish to presume that
Teachers change lives
*And all of this will come true **unless we reverse it.***
Jane Garver

Sammy

I'm sorry I left you in that tree
I really thought
You were in the van with me
I talked and chatted
All the way down Marion Center
Road
Until...
"Sammy?"
And there you were
Still up in that tree
I'm sorry
Love,
Mom
-Dawn Hovie

Robby

I'm sorry I laughed
When you said that you would be
A rock star some day
"You just wait! Crowds will be
screaming my name!"
But you never, ever
Practiced your guitar
Until now
When you're up on stage
And crowds
Are screaming your name
I'm sorry
Love,
Mom
-Dawn Hovie

Dawn

Who is learning Spanish (sort of)
Relative of Robby, Sammy, and Tom
Lover of tap dancing and camp
Who feels achy in my joints
Who needs 10 minutes of yoga every day
Who fears speaking my mind
Who gives the gift of reading to children
Who would like to travel more
Resident of Hayes Township

Hovie